

Drumheller & District Rural Crime Watch

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Next meeting is April 19, 2017 at the BCF in Drumheller at 7 pm.

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A Message From The RCMP

Hello again. Since my message in the last news letter, the Drumheller RCMP have noticed a large increase in thefts from rural construction and gas sites. The items most targeted are copper, tools and other materials that can be resold.

If you see any suspicious people or vehicles that do not belong in your rural area please contact the Drumheller RCMP at 403-823-2630.

Cst. J.J. Girard
RCMP

Getting The Message Out

Our Rural Crime Watch Association covers a large area. It includes parts of Starland County, Kneehill County, Wheatland County, Stettler County and Newell County. We have been trying to figure out ways to get more members

in each zone. The more eyes and ears the better.

We are going to have a booth at the Spring Expo in Drumheller on the weekend of April 21-23, 2017. It is going to be held at the Greentree Mall.

We are going to need volunteers to help with the

booth so if you are interested please contact Dorothy Gwynn at 403-772-3793 or email her at info@drumcrimewatch.com.

Shifts will be two hours long and we will need two people for each shift.



Family Violence Presentation

A Domestic Violence Presentation was held at Morrin School and Della School in December for students in grades 7 to 9.

There are 51 shelters in Alberta supporting women and children who have experienced family violence. In 2015, 5418 women and 5149 children were supported while 8000 women and 8000 children were turned away due to lack of space.

Eighty percent of people who were assaulted knew the assailant prior to the attack and felt safe with them. Abusers know how to make you feel comfortable before making a move.

At the Morrin School presentation, one of the speakers, Randy Chevlier of

the Calgary Stampeders, asked everyone present to picture a woman in their lives you would go into a burning building to save. If that woman was a victim of physical or emotional abuse, what would you do? Gender violence can take the form of verbal, physical or sexual abuse.

So what do you do if you see someone being abused? It is easier to confront a stranger than it is to confront a friend. Since this presentation was directed at students, part of the focus was on violence in the schools.



Upcoming Meetings

Our next meeting is going to be held on April 19, 2017 at the Badlands Community Facility in the large meeting room, commencing at 7 pm.

Please plan to attend. It is a great way to meet your fellow Crime Watch members, hear what the RCMP have to say and learn what is happening in your community.

Membership Renewal

Memberships for 2017 are due on November 1, 2016. Send your payment of \$20 to the Association's mailbox listed on the back page.

Your membership fee helps cover operational expenses.

Mind The Road

Patty Milligan hasn't always been a model motorist. The Bon Accord resident (and longtime AMA member) spends much of her driving time on rural roads, and admits that typically light traffic has meant she's sometimes indulged in device use while driving.

"I've been sloppy over the years," she says. "Living in a rural area, it's very easy to think, 'No one's around, what's the big deal if I make a short call or send a quick text?'"

The big deal is that driving while using mobile phones and other handheld devices is one of the most dangerous things we can do on the road. It's a risk even in rural areas, where increased driving speeds mean less time to recognize and react to hazards, and greater likelihood of serious injury if a collision occurs.

According to an August 2016 CAA survey, 94 percent of members believe texting while driving is a serious threat to their personal safety; 85 percent said the same about talking on a phone. Yet we still see drivers with devices in their hands, despite provincial prohibitions that have been in place since 2011.

Nowadays, many new vehicles come with a voice-activated system designed to operate your smartphone—with commands for

sending emails and texts, making calls, navigating by GPS, controlling music and more. These systems help you keep both hands on the wheel, but they can still take your concentration off the road.

Extensive research, funded in part by CAA, has found that interacting with voice-activated technologies has a major impact on drivers' mental workload, creating a significant "cognitive distraction." Your brain can't fully engage with the complex task of driving while also carrying on a text or voice conversation. Even if your eyes are on the road, you're actually seeing less and your ability to react to obstacles is impaired.

The study graded a range of possible distractions on a five-point scale. Texting while driving was found to be a category 4, or maximum-risk distraction. Most voice-activated systems scored a 3 or higher. Listening to the radio scored a 1.

The danger of cognitive distraction is compounded by the fact that it can persist for as long as 27 seconds after you've sent your message or ended your call.

"A lot can happen on the road during that time. A traffic light could change, a pedestrian could walk across the road or another vehicle could make a sudden stop," says Jeff Kasbrick, AMA's vice-president of government and stake-

holder relations. "Using your phone when stopped at an intersection is just as dangerous as using it while driving. Intersections are very dangerous places for collisions. Drivers need to pay attention to what's happening around them."

So how do we convince drivers to put down their devices? AMA believes that legislation and enforcement are important, but education is crucial—especially when it comes to future drivers. "It's very important to stop people from becoming distracted drivers before they start," Kasbrick says.

Milligan says her 11-year-old son has played a vital role in keeping her focused on the road. "He's been taught that, just like drinking and driving, it's dangerous to use a device while driving. So not only does he make sure I've got both hands on the wheel, but now that he's old enough, he can be the one to send the text saying, 'We're on our way.'"

Be a Good Passenger

You wouldn't allow a loved one to drink and drive, so let them know that using a device while at the wheel is just as dangerous. As a passenger you can also:

- Take care of the navigating
- Offer to be the designated texter
- Remind them of Alberta's distracted-driving penalties—a \$287 fine plus three demerit points, or \$543 and six demerits if they're deemed to be distracted *and* driving recklessly

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March is Fraud Prevention Month

We all need to remember the motto, "if it sounds too good to be true, it's probably not true." If you think someone is trying to defraud you, break off all contact and call the RCMP. The Drumheller detachment number is 403-823-7590. Also, please talk to your elderly relatives and remind them not to give money to anyone. Tell them it's ok to hang up the phone or close the door. If they feel threatened they should contact the RCMP as well.



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Emergency: 911
RCMP Non-Emergency #: 403-823-2630
Report A Poacher: 1-800-642-3800

Spring is just around the corner and farmers will be back at work out in the field. They will also be leaving equipment parked out there as well so we all need to keep an eye out for any suspicious activity.

Gas theft is on the rise and people are still stealing copper wire.

Remember if you see anything suspicious, contact the RCMP at the non-emergency number 403-823-2630. Do not do anything that would put you in harms way.

How To Contact Us

Thanks to our friends at Netago in Hanna, we now have email addresses for our executive and zone captains.

General Mailbox

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